

## **M E M O R A N D U M**

**April 3, 2003**

**To: John, Barry, COA Members**

**From: Nancy**

**Re: COA meeting**

### **Upsetting Elements Which Deserve Attention**

- **Isaac obviously met with COA members prior to the public meeting to plan their approach. This felt like a violation of the public meeting law.**
- **Isaac presumed that staff understood that the COA intended to pay for van rentals until December--in spite of the fact that this idea was never in the approved minutes and never voted. He blamed staff for not communicating this FACT to seniors which, he said, led to an unnecessary misunderstanding.**
- **Isaac blamed staff for producing and promoting the petition and did not check his facts. It is hard to understand why he, of all people, didn't accept that other Seniors are capable of independent political action.**
- **Isaac ruled on who was to speak in a very rude and insulting manner. His demeaning approach has made several seniors and staff in attendance angry and upset.**
- **Isaac had the COA go into a previously unannounced, unscheduled Executive Session to discuss personnel with no staff present. This is illegal on two counts.**
- **Isaac asked seniors in attendance patronizingly obvious questions as a group, much like a lawyer would in a quiz format. The questions were posed in a way that attempted to elevate the COA's intentions at the expense of the staff's. The technique leads those questioned to deduce that if they are in agreement with him on his points, then they have no legitimate need to be concerned about the issues at hand.**
- **A COA member presented a van rental quote to try to prove that staff can rent at even cheaper rates than what they reported. This implied that staff were fudging the numbers to make their case. Insurance fees, however, were not considered in the figure quoted.**
- **Doris Mundo spoke angrily and patronizingly to staff and attendees about how every hour of her time is worth \$100 and this is her donation that she resents having to waste on non-issues that appear because of poor staff communication. It felt like she thinks her time is more valuable than others in attendance and this was insulting.**
- **Isaac further tried to seek praise at the end of the meeting in announcing (out of context) the good work the COA had done on the prescription drug rebate. "How many of you have received your CVS refunds?" It felt like this was Isaac's attempt to further ingratiate the attendees with the COA's hard work on their behalf, thus implying that the COA always knows best about senior issues.**
- **This meeting reflected and promoted divisiveness between the COA and staff. Clearly the COA thought that they had made their decision not to pay for van repair based on sufficient information. The whole issue is complex and should have been scheduled as a full agenda item back in February. Staff felt the COA alone feels it's concerned with safety. Feelings on both sides have been hurt.**